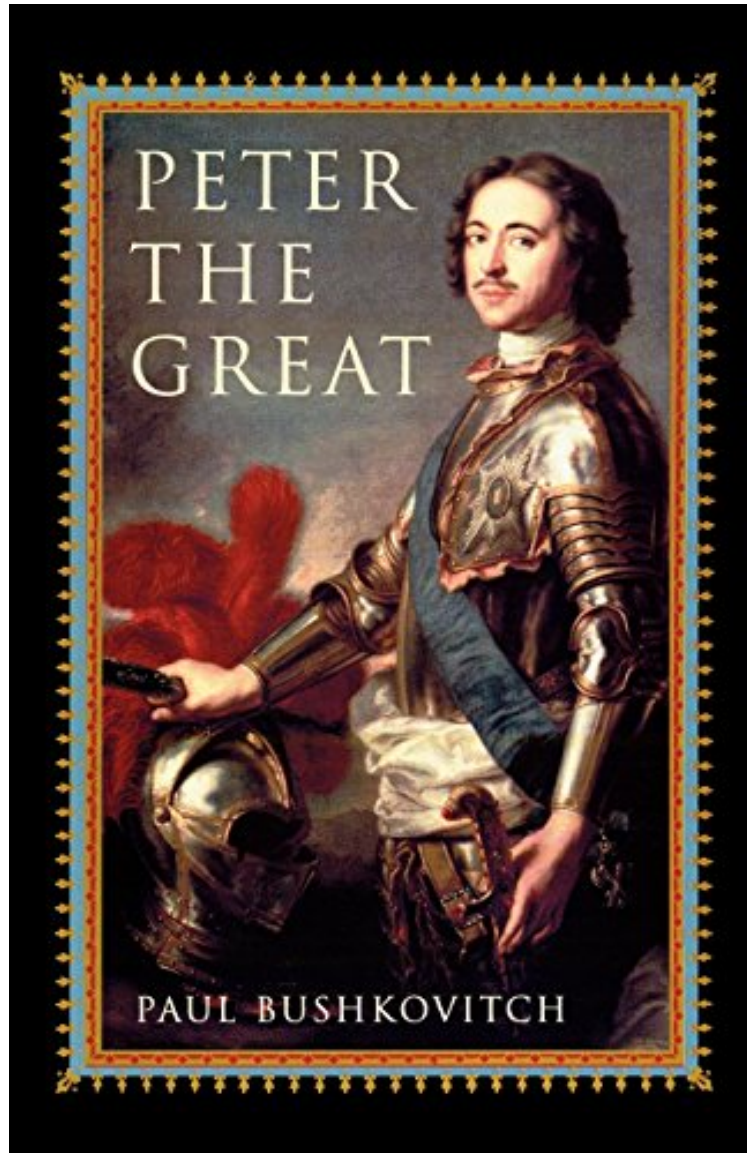


(Library ebook) Peter the Great (Critical Issues in World and International History)

Peter the Great (Critical Issues in World and International History)

Paul Bushkovitch

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Paul Bushkovitch : Peter the Great (Critical Issues in World and International History) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Peter the Great (Critical Issues in World and International History):

2 of 4 people found the following review helpful. A terse, compact, yet artfully presented biographyBy Midwest Book ReviewSuperbly written by Paul Bushkovitch (Professor of History, Yale University), Peter The Great is a terse, compact, yet artfully presented biography of one of Russia's greatest and most influential rulers. Portraying the culture

and problems of Russia at the end of the seventeenth century, and examining the events of Peter's reign and its legacy to history, Peter The Great is an informed, informative, and thoroughly absorbing study which is very highly recommended for students of Russian History and non-specialist general readers with an appreciation of the art and science of biography. 5 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Not for the general reader
By Jennifer I found this book to be disjointed and difficult to read. The sentences were awkward, and I detected several grammatical errors throughout the book that could potentially confuse the reader (they confused me!) The first half of the book centered on Russian politics and aristocracy; Peter didn't play much of a role until the latter part of the text. Even then, the chronology was confusing. Daughters that had never been mentioned suddenly got married; Peter died in one chapter, while his military strategy was described in the next, along with somewhat random details of his death that had been previously left out. Perhaps it's my lack of familiarity with Russian history, but I had great difficulty telling who was who and what happened when within the biography. In addition, it was rather boring in the beginning. However, the book did do a good job of providing the reader with a mostly unbiased view of Peter and the Russia he ruled, as well as an understanding of the political machinations of his day. All in all, I wouldn't recommend it for general readers.

Centuries after he ruled Russia from 1689 to 1725, Peter the Great remains one of the most revered and enigmatic leaders in world history. This penetrating study by noted Yale historian Paul Bushkovitch casts new light on Peter and his times, and demonstrates why it is impossible to comprehend the later course of Russian history without first grasping Peter's profound influence. Bushkovitch illustrates how Peter, during his thirty-six years as tsar, transformed his country into a modern nation--he strengthened the state, reorganized the army, established a navy, and conquered new territories. In addition to these momentous achievements, Peter changed the face of the Russian character by introducing European culture, scientific innovations, and political thought to Russia. His influence ultimately paved the way for liberalism, Western-style nationalism, and communism. In the end, neither his contemporaries nor generations of future historians can agree on how Peter should be remembered: was he a heroic reformer who brought Russia into the modern age, or a violent despot who valued the ideas of foreigners over Russian heritage?

Unlike so many books that stress Peter's foreign policy, Bushkovitch's Peter the Great focuses on domestic and cultural reforms and Peter's struggle with conservative aristocratic opposition. Concise and tightly argued, this book sets forth the myriad contexts in which Peter acted--Muscovite tradition, seventeenth-century cultural change and late Baroque Europe--and analyzes the key reforms. By focusing on power and political reform, Bushkovitch brilliantly demonstrates the logic that drove Peter's incessant drive to Europeanize Russia. (Nancy Kollmann) In this brief and easily digestible biography, Bushkovitch captures the essence of Peter's powerful personality--his physical strength, his ceaseless curiosity, and his indomitable will. Unlike several of Peter's earlier biographers, Bushkovitch downplays his subject's image as a lone-wolf modernizer; rather, he asserts that Peter often acted in concert with many of his supposedly reluctant nobles. This well-written survey of the life of an important, dynamic, and often frightening ruler should encourage general readers to delve deeper into the subject. (Booklist) It is Bushkovitch's incisive analysis of Peter the Great's relations with his aristocracy that sets this volume apart from other books on the subject. By demystifying the achievements of Russia's greatest ruler, Bushkovitch distills the complex personal politics of westernization for the general reader. It should serve as the standard introduction to Peter the Great for years to come. (Leckey, Colum) A dramatic, clear, and engaging portrait of Russia's great emperor and his policies... An original and convincing explanation of Peter's reforms of Russian government..... (Jane Burbank) This is an exciting book that will provide readers with a very different look at early 18th-century Russia. Bushkovitch illuminates the complexities of reform and aristocratic politics during the last years of Alexis Mikhailovich as well as during the reigns of Tsar Fyodor and the regency of Sofia Alexeevna. The scholarship is excellent and it contains new material on the role of the great aristocrats during this period. Bushkovitch's direct and clear writing style is appropriate for all audiences from the least to the most sophisticated. He has the ability to convey the most interesting information in a clear and sensible manner. (Alexandra S. Korros) A dramatic, clear, and engaging portrait of Russia's great emperor and his policies... An original and convincing explanation of Peter's reforms of Russian government. (Jane Burbank) About the Author Paul Bushkovitch is professor of history at Yale University.